UNSEEING EYES OF THE EAST

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UNSEEING EYES OF THE EAST

By Elsie Weil

THE elevator descending from the roof ballroom of a New York hotel was crowded with delegates to the World Conference on Work for the Blind. Many of them were themselves blind. They got off at their different floors, and finally only one young man was left.

"Don't you want to get out here?" I asked as we came to the main floor.

"Thank you, no," he replied. "I am taking the subway."

I myself was taking the B.M.T. I rarely venture into the confusing labyrinth of the subways at the Pennsylvania Station, and I felt keenly the responsibility of guiding a blind man through the rush-hour maelstrom. At the lower level, I asked the way. Some one pointed down a long passage. The blind man commented mildly: "I could have told you that. I knew we had to turn to the left and then to the right when we got out of the elevator."

Farther on, tunnels suddenly bristled to left and right. People scurried like beetles up and down stairs, through gates and wickets. I murmured apologetically that I should again have to ask the way of a guard.

My companion held out a detaining hand, and a smile lighted his face. "The Hudson Tubes are to the right of us. Can't you hear the coins clinking in the glass boxes and feel the dampness of the air? We turn left, then right and go straight ahead, then left again and down some steps."

Another blind young man whose self-reliance puts me to shame is an Armenian now in this country, Tateos Mukhdjian. He lost all his family when war swept over his home many years ago. In one of the Greek orphanages of the Near East Relief he learned English and devoured all the books in braille that could be obtained. He was such a good student that he was sent on a scholarship to the famous Perkins Institution for the blind at Watertown, Massachusetts. Tateos walks independently through our city traffic. He knows instinctively when to cross the street. "I can tell when I have reached the end of a building," he explains unaffectedly, "from the feeling of the air in my face. And then long practice has taught me how much farther the curbstone is." Tateos speaks six languages; he is skillful with the typewriter; he plays the violin. He intends to use his training for the benefit of the blind in the Near East, when he has completed his education in the United States.

Near East Foundation

In a Near East Foundation school for the blind in Syria this blind youth is being trained for economic independence

All-India Blind Relief Association

The blind in India are particularly unfortunate because their blindness is attributed to a misdeed committed in this or in a former life

Another picture, not so hopeful, has persisted tenaciously in a dark corner of my memory. The background is winter in old Peking. I had wandered for a whole morning in the grounds of the blue-domed Temple of Heaven and had come out at last, half dreaming and filled with the peace of that fragile yet immortal bit of loveliness. At the outer gate I almost stumbled over three blind beggars. Shivering in their blue cotton rags, with bones protruding through the tatters, they crouched against the faded wall, a man, a woman and a boy. Horrible caverns were where their eyes should have been, and they beat sticks and chanted in a heart-rending monotone as they stretched out their hands for coppers. I was shocked back to the grim reality of street life in Peking. One encountered them everywhere, those blind beggars—blocking the shop entrances of exasperated merchants, casting their reproachful shadows across the gay bartering of bazars and patiently waiting, waiting, waiting, in temple compounds. Sometimes in narrow streets one brushed against a string of them, a half-dozen or more, tapping and groping their way with long bamboo poles. They, as well as Confucius, belong to China. There are no statistics of the blind for China, but one seems to hear more than a million blind persons tapping their bamboo poles from the mountain

After King Kalakaua had promulgated the "Monroe Doctrine of the Pacific," which looked toward the formation of a Pacific island empire dominated by Hawaii, he began to long for a navy. Here he is (in civilian clothes on the bridge, outlined against the funnel) on board the famous "Kaimiloa," a refitted trading vessel manned by boys from the state reformatory

spirators met at the Palama house and, marching to the palace, entered the grounds about dawn. They demanded the surrender of the palace, but the captain of the palace guards refused, saying that the guards would resist to the last man. The conspirators wavered, and most of them slipped away before it was light, leaving Wilcox and a few leaders to hold the sack.

When daylight came, Honolulu began to buzz like a hornets' nest. The Iolani Palace and grounds occupy a square block, and on all sides there are tall buildings that dominate the grounds. White citizens arose in defense of the government and began to snipe the conspirators from all directions. They took refuge in a little building in the palace grounds and finally surrendered after seven of them had been killed.

Wilcox was tried for treason, and his plea was that he was acting with the consent of the King! On this ground he was acquitted. His effort was apparently an attempt at a *coup d'état* to restore the former powers to the King. There was no doubt an understanding between Wilcox and Kalakaua, as Wilcox claimed. But, if so, what happened to throw the plot out of gear at the last moment? Why did two or three hundred conspirators lose heart when fifty guards refused to surrender? What did they expect?

A story is told here in Honolulu that accounts simply and logically for all the tangled facts in this queer drama. Whether the story is true or not I have no historical proof, but it bears every indication of being substantially accurate.

According to the story, Liliuokalani, the indomitable, never forgave her brother for allowing the royal authority to pass from him to an alien cabinet. As heir-apparent to the throne, she felt she had been injured by his breach of trust. She kept after him until he agreed to sanction an attempt to regain his lost power. Wilcox, Liliuokalani and Kalakaua were all in the plot that was formulated in Liliuokalani's Palama house. The night was set. Kalakaua agreed to give orders to the captain of the guard to offer no resistance to the attackers. There would be no conflict. When daylight came, the revolutionists would be in possession of all the public buildings.

Early in the evening, however, a breathless messenger arrived from Palama with a tale that put a different light on the situation. "Your Majesty," he panted, "I have just learned you are being betrayed. The revolution is not for you; it is for Liliuokalani. It is she who is to be supported on the restored throne and not Your Majesty."

Kalakaua immediately called the captain of the palace guards and countermanded the orders he had given to admit the conspirators, ordering him to hold the palace at all costs. When the conspirators arrived and were met by leveled rifles of the guard, they realized that the King had been warned in some way and the jig was up. Hence most of them slipped away before daylight. Thus the plot within a plot failed. (*Continued on page 194*)

barriers of Szechwan to the coast of Kwangtung, whining helplessly for coppers from Manchuria to Yunnan.

As it is with China, so it is with the rest of the Orient. Except for Japan and Egypt, there are no reliable statistics of the blind. All we know is that there are several million blind persons in that great belt of blindness stretching from China to Morocco. Authorities on eye diseases in India have refused to accept the census figures and have estimated that there are one and a half million totally blind and four and a half million partially blind persons in India, varying in different districts from 450 to 900 totally blind persons per 100,000. The percentage of totally blind in the United States is 49 per 100,000; in England and Wales, 119; in Belgium, 36, the lowest figure for any country. Japan, with 105, compares favorably with England, but Egypt heads the list with 1,219 totally blind per 100,000 of the population.

The observing traveler cannot touch even the eastern shores of the Mediterranean without becoming sensitive to the situation. Pyramids, excavated tombs of the Pharaohs, dramatic street life of Cairo, Holy Sepulcher and Wailing Wall—ever the armies of blind press forward, without banners or slogans or leaders. Their religious heritage leads them to accept their fate with a philosophic shrug of oriental shoulders. And, farther East, festivals along the sacred Ganges, the Yangtze teeming with junks, the lantern-dancing Sumida at the time of the Kawabiraki—all the pulse-stirring river world of the East—unfold for alien enjoyment but remain forever bleakly curtained from the native blind. Of all handicapped people, however, the blind probably most resent pity. The only boon they crave is industrial or professional training that will equip them to meet the sighted on a more equitable basis. They don't like "it," but they make the best of "it."

The poverty, at starvation level, of the oriental masses —with its logical corollaries, overcrowding, lack of sanitation, ignorance of modern hygiene and western medical science—is largely responsible for the appalling amount of blindness in the East. The main contributing causes of blindness—trachoma, ophthalmia neonatorum, cataract, glaucoma, smallpox and venereal diseases—are largely preventable. The delegates from the Orient to the world blind conference of last year all agreed that throughout the East the emphasis should be placed on aggressive work for the prevention of blindness rather than on educational training and social amelioration for those already blind. It has been only in the twentieth century, after all, that organized efforts for the prevention of blindness have really been pushed in the progressive and prosperous countries of the West. In spite of the enlightened social and educational work for the blind and the many professions now open to them in the United States, one still sees on the streets of our most thriving cities too many beggars with tin cups and accordions, who are not so different from the Chinese blind with their bamboo poles and three-stringed guitars.

Perhaps the condition of the blind in Japan is happier than anywhere else in the East. They have a popular means of self-support, massage. At evening time in Tokyo, and sometimes late at night, I used to hear the wistful flute call of an *amma*, or blind masseur, groping along the narrow lanes, announcing that he was ready to stop and knead the muscles of a rheumatic business man or a weary laborer. Even the Japanese working classes indulge themselves in the restful luxury of massage, recommended by the old-time Japanese physician for all sorts of ailments.

From early feudal times until the Meiji Restoration, in 1868, the blind exercised special privileges in Japan. Massage, shampooing, acupuncture and moxibustion were their monopolies. Today the sighted have made serious

Alma B. Kjelland Kerr

This blind "mullah" of Bagdad, who can recognize by voice every one in his quarter, is reputed to be a master in revealing perpetrators of crimes by black magic

inroads into these professions, but there are still 24,000 blind masseurs in Japan and less than half that number practising massage who are not blind, and there are more than 2,000 blind acupuncturists. To acquire a

Willard Price

At the left is an Egyptian teacher, undoubtedly blinded through smallpox, reading the Bible in Arabic braille; below is a prize-winning poster in a recent contest held under the auspices of the American University at Cairo. The Arabic inscription reads: "Flies are carriers of eye diseases. Kill them!"

mastery of these particular arts, the blind have long been accustomed to attend special schools.

Moxibustion, which is as characteristic of Japan as the tea ceremony or dwarfed pine trees in glazed pots, is a method of cauterization, performed by burning dried leaves of the moxa, or mugwort, on the surface of the body. Moxibustion is considered efficacious for headache, fainting spells, rheumatism and arthritis. An old Japanese medical treatise advises its regular use. "Even those who are otherwise in a good state of health should be burned twice a year—once in the second month [March] and once in the eighth month [September]." The operation of acupuncture—said to be as popular today among the Japanese working classes in the treatment of all kinds of disease as at any previous period—consists in piercing the skin and underlying tissues with superfine needles several inches long. From one to twenty punctures are made, usually in the abdominal region. With their sensitive touch, the blind seem to have no difficulty in locating the seat of pain, and, possessing an almost uncanny knowledge of anatomy and especially of the location of the superficial muscles, they instinctively insert their needles in the precise spot prescribed.

A celebrated blind medical man of feudal Japan, founder of a popular method of acupuncture and the author of two standard works on the subject, was Waichi Sugiyama. Sugiyama, a native of Hamamatsu, losing his sight at the age of ten, traveled to Yedo—now Tokyo—the capital of the *Shoguns*, to study under a celebrated blind acupuncturist. He became very skillful with the long needles and soon was as much in demand among the pampered, brocaded aristocracy of the period as a fashionable psychiatrist is with neurasthenic idlers among us today. On one occasion he was called to attend Shogun Tsunayoshi, who was so pleased with his treatment that he offered Sugiyama any reward he might ask.

"If it may please Your Highness," Sugiyama said, "I should like to have one eye."

The Shogun laughed as he replied, "I cannot give you an eye, but I will give you a residence in *Hitotsu-me cho*" —One-Eye Street, in Honjo Ward.

Sugiyama was also given an annual pension of five hundred *koku* of rice and was raised to the rank of superintendent of the blind in the Kwanto, or eight provinces surrounding Yedo. In 1682 the same Shogun ordered Sugiyama to restore acupuncture as one of the leading branches of instruction at the schools where it had been neglected for a long period.

The paternal interest of the Japanese state in its blind actually dates back to the ninth century. Prince Hitoyasu, the young son of the fifty-fourth Emperor, Nimmyo (834–850) lost his sight. Entering the priesthood, the Prince distributed his income among the blind. It was at this time that the profession of massage was entirely turned over to the blind, and many government posts were awarded to the more capable and talented among them. The government also levied a

Tokyo School for the Blind

In Japan the blind have a popular means of self-support—massage—and the government has taken a paternal interest in their welfare. Since the blind are often gifted musicians, the various Japanese schools for the blind provide special music departments, and blind teachers give instruction to students in the two favorite instruments of the blind, the "koto" and the "samisen"

poor rate for their benefit throughout the kingdom. The blind themselves had to pay only a small fee to their local guild. Some of those in official positions had an opportunity to amass considerable fortunes, and money-lending became another occupation associated with the blind in Japan.

In the early days, the blind were divided into two classes, the *Mosos*, or blind monks, and the *Todos*, or blind laymen. The order of blind monks was founded by the celebrated Buddhist priest and hero of countless legends, Kobo Daishi, who lived at the beginning of the ninth century. The blind monks went about the country playing the *biwa*, or lute, and reciting Buddhist *sutras* for the protection of travelers. The Todos, classed with the "long-robed," or professional persons, were minutely subdivided in rank. The lowest rank was that of amma. With the next rank, that of *shibun*, and succeeding ranks, the possessors were entitled to unique privileges. They could carry the two swords of the *samurai*, wear a ceremonial robe on certain occasions and flourish a white stick surmounted by a wooden ball. With the third degree, *koto*, the blind man was graduated to teaching music. *Kengyo* and *sokengyo* were the highest ranks, the honorable reward of professional ability and integrity of character. Such men supervised the welfare of the blind throughout Japan and acted as judges in all matters relating to them.

Among those awarded the highest honorary titles were some remarkable men. Hokiichi Hanawa, blind from infancy, became a celebrated writer and professor of mathematics. He had such a retentive memory that he could recognize at once a quotation from any book in his vast library and could give the number of the page from which the quotation was taken. He compiled more than one thousand volumes—stupendous histories and other works of a serious nature, requiring research and scholarship. Hanawa had many pupils. One night when he was delivering a discourse on one of the classics, the wind blew out the candle.

"Teacher, wait," begged one of his students. "We cannot see the book."

The blind scholar was quietly amused. "What is an inconvenience for you makes no difference to one like me."

Blind Japanese are often gifted musicians. The blind musicians' guild is said to have been founded by a general who tore out his own eyes that he might not be tempted to slay the noble prince who had captured him but had treated him with every consideration. The *koto* and the *samisen* are favorite instruments of the blind. At Tokyo Musical College today are two distinguished blind koto players and teachers, Keisho Imai and Michio Miyagi.

When the special privileges for the blind were abolished at the time of the Meiji Restoration, the sighted began to invade the callings previously reserved for the blind. But the Japanese gradually began to introduce western methods of training and measures for the prevention of blindness. Trachoma legislation, requiring

Palestine Photo Service

Organized ophthalmic work in Palestine is now combating the ravages of trachoma and other eye diseases prevalent in the Near East. This open-air clinic in Jerusalem is doing its part to prevent future blindness by giving free treatment for sore eyes

medical inspection and hygienic precautions in schools and factories and the supervision and treatment of trachoma patients, has now noticeably reduced blindness resulting from trachoma. Smallpox, to which the first Westerners in Japan attributed most of the blindness, has been practically eliminated today by compulsory vaccination.

The pioneer in blind education of a modern type in Japan, Tashiro Furukawa, opened in Kyoto, in 1876, the first institute for the blind and the deaf. The Tokyo School for the Blind was established four years later. The director of this institution, Professor Umaji Akiba, headed the Japanese delegation to the world blind conference. He has specialized in a study of the psychology of the blind and has been active in pushing national blind legislation. Every prefecture of Japan now has at least one school for the blind. There are ninety schools in all. In the most progressive of them, students are taken from kindergarten through high school; in several, normal school training is also offered.

It was a teacher in the Tokyo School for the Blind who, in 1890, adapted the Japanese syllabary system into braille. Most Japanese blind schools now have small embossing machines for their own use, but braille books for Japan are chiefly issued from the printing houses for the blind in Osaka and Gifu. Two braille newspapers are published in Japan, the *Osaka Daily Braille* and the *Daily Oriental Braille.* Many graduates of the Japanese schools for the blind have in turn become teachers and principals of similar schools.

Just as massage has been for so many centuries the monopoly of the blind in Japan, fortune-telling has been, since the Sung Dynasty, the traditional occupation of the more fortunate Chinese blind, that is, those not forced into beggary. A recent decree of the Nanking government banning all superstitious practices, including fortune-telling, would, if put into effect, deprive thousands of blind men and women of their only means of livelihood. It is not likely, however, that the edict will be enforced. In any case, it is understood that the government, heeding the petition of the leaders among the blind, will allow the fortune-tellers a few years of grace in which to prepare for work more in keeping with modern ideas.

The blind fortune-tellers, who practise the branch of prophecy known as necromancy, have their own guild. Students are initiated into the mysteries of the necromancer's art in schools established for the purpose. The "course," which includes the committing to memory of a complicated system of prophecy and interpretation of omens with reference to specific occasions, usually takes

three years. Tuition and board in the more ambitious schools may come to three or four hundred dollars, but shabby little schools tucked into hidden byways offer less elaborate instruction to pupils recruited from the poor. Among Chinese families who still cling to the old traditions, a necromancer must determine the auspicious date for betrothals and marriage. When some one dies, again the fortune-teller must work out the proper day for the funeral and decide the momentous question whether the coffin should be laid east or west. It is all intricately bound up with *feng-shui*, the wind-and-water elements supposed to exercise a powerful influence on the relation of the dead to the living. When one goes off on a journey, initiates a new business enterprise, sends a child to school, in fact, for every important event in life in China, the necromancer is solemnly consulted.

Even obscure fortune-tellers who wander through the streets ringing their little bells are able to earn from twenty to thirty Mexican dollars a month. Some, with shops of their own, amass modest fortunes. "Blind Wu," a well-known Shanghai character who has his shop in Nanking Road, is reported to harvest an income of twelve hundred dollars a month, but his expenses are high also. He maintains a pretentious staff, including several Taoist priests to chant effective prayers for his wealthy patrons.

Confucius lifted music to an important plane in China, and, to the Chinese blind, music has stood for a door of escape from a world of darkness. In the old days, many mandarins occupying important positions at the court of the August Son of Heaven included two or three hundred blind musicians among their personal retainers. Today one frequently meets blind musicians and singers going through the streets with a kind of long, narrow, three-stringed guitar. This inevitable part of the equipment of the blind musician has become known as the "blind guitar." So proficient are some of the street musicians that they might be Chinese Segovias, given the proper setting and publicity for their performances. The blind street singers, like the minstrels of old, call at inns or tea shops or appear at the compounds of private homes. Their ballad singing is thoroughly enjoyed in a country where reading has not yet advanced to the tabloid-newspaper stage and where professional story-telling is still a favorite form of entertainment. The singers have a versatile repertoire of historic and religious legends, love songs, humorous ditties and also, for patrons who demand them, a stock of ribald songs.

The Chinese goddess popularly believed to cure all eye diseases bears the mellifluous name of *Yen-kwang-niang-niang-sheng-tan*. Her birthday is celebrated on the sixth day of the third month. On the lofty peak of Tai Shan, in Shantung Province, dwells the Goddess-who-cures-eyes, in eternal company with the Goddess-who-presides-over-births and the Princess-of-colored-clouds, the patron deity of the sacred mountain. The two faithful ladies of the Princess's court are always spoken of together as the "Holy Mothers of Eye-Healing and Posterity." Women who long for sons lay boy dolls at the feet of the Goddess-who-presides-over-births. Persons suffering from eye disease touch the image of the Goddess-who-cures-eyes and then rub their own eyes, believing this act an effective cure for every sort of trouble. Near the main gate of the temple once stood the Golden Pavilion, in which was enshrined a magnificent bronze image of the Princess-of-colored-clouds, presented by the Ming Emperor Wan-li,

Mabel Huggins

The Chinese Goddess-who-cures-eyes gives no clue to her identity, but the eye that her servant carries is as good as a visiting card. Persons suffering from eye trouble seek to be cured by touching the goddess

at the end of the sixteenth century. By this offering the Emperor hoped to propitiate the three divinities and prevent the blindness then threatening his mother. The record does not say whether he won the favor of the Princess.

When emperors as well as ignorant peasants have resorted to magic charms instead of to medical treatment and hygienic precautions, it is not surprising that eye diseases have attained almost hopeless proportions in China. The causes are not far to seek. For one,

itinerant barbers have a primitive custom of turning back the eyelids and cleaning the under surface with instruments that have never known boiling water. Naturally this "cleansing" process merely irritates the eyes and often results in chronic conjunctivitis. Persistence in the practice may lead to blindness. It has been estimated that 60 to 70 per cent of the population in the north, 40 to 50 per cent in the central provinces and 20 to 30 per cent in the south of China suffer from trachoma.

No government organization exists in China for the prevention of blindness, and officially little has been done to ameliorate the general condition of those already blind. No people in the world have a stronger sense of family responsibility than the Chinese, and those in comfortable circumstances have always taken care of their blind relatives, but the conviction, inherited with Buddhism from India, that blindness is a direct punishment for wrongdoing in this or a previous life, unfortunately has had the effect of putting victims of blindness in the category of social outcasts.

The institutions for the Chinese blind, founded by foreign missionaries and local Chinese philanthropists, are hampered by lack of funds and have suffered from the civil wars and unrest that have ravaged China for years. Several schools were looted by mobs, and precious braille manuscripts, copied out by hand, were destroyed. Little of lasting benefit can be accomplished for the blind in China until an era of tranquillity makes it possible to carry out a program of social reconstruction and education on a widespread and uniform scale. For the moment, the prospect is none too bright.

To the Reverend William Hill Murray, of the Bible Society of Scotland, the Chinese blind owe the introduction of braille. In 1874 he started a school for the blind in Peking. This school, now known as the Hill Murray Institute for the Blind, is still rendering a much needed service to the community. Mr. Murray was the inventor of a system of braille in which a number was given to each of the four hundred and eight basic sounds in the Chinese language. The standard braille is formed by varying combinations of six raised dots. Out of these combinations sixty-three separate symbols can be produced. In our system these symbols are used to represent the twenty-six letters of the alphabet, punctuation marks and musical notes. In Murray's system the raised dots represented numerals. The pupils had to learn not only the braille dots for four hundred and eight separate numerals but the sounds associated with them. Although the method was unwieldy, overburdening the memory, it attained great success. Mr. Murray even experimented on the illiterate sighted, changing the embossed dots to black lines easily visible to the eye. He found that ignorant peasants, instructed by blind teachers in his school from specially prepared books, were soon reading more fluently than students who had been devoting six or eight years to the study of the four thousand characters necessary to a simple reading knowledge of Chinese. Fifteen or twenty years ago the Union Mandarin System, invented by Miss Garland of the China Inland Mission, was adopted by all workers for the blind in China. In this system, eighteen initials and thirty-six finals are used in combinations to express the basic sounds of the Chinese language.

One school stands out from the rest in China, pointing the way toward what can be done for the blind. It is the Shanghai Institution for the Chinese Blind, founded by Dr. John Fryer in 1911 and directed from the beginning by his son, George B. Fryer. Dr. Fryer, who went to China in 1860 and who numbered among his first pupils Wu Ting-fang and others who later distinguished themselves in the official and industrial life of the country, was also for many years professor of oriental languages and literature at the University of California. He was equipped to bring the best of western thought to China and of Chinese culture to the West. The Shanghai institution carries its pupils from kindergarten to college. In 1930 its first blind graduate received his B.A. degree from St. John's University, in Shanghai. He is now the principal teacher in the Fryer institution, the primary object of which is to train teachers for other blind schools.

The Institution for the Chinese Blind owns a small braille press, and a monthly braille magazine is sent free to all who can read it. The free offer of the magazine has been made possible through the Australian Mission to the Blind in Heathen and Bible Lands. This mission is the inspiration of an Australian, Mr. Beyer. Blind and paralyzed, he lay in the unending darkness of his room, working out a plan to help other unfortunate people. On his birthday friends and acquaintances who admired his spirit of courage often sent him presents. He conceived the idea of a birthday fund, to form the nucleus for his organization. Mr. Beyer's mission takes care of one pupil at the Shanghai blind school. In various remote parts of Asia and Africa, a blind pupil here, a teacher there, is supported by a blind paralytic who thinks others are worse off than he.

The problem of blindness in India is in some ways even more serious than in China. In all countries of glaring sunlight, intense heat and dust a high percentage of blindness obtains. It has been noted that within the geographically varied regions of the subcontinent of India there is more blindness in the Punjab, the United Provinces and Rajputana, where glare and dust are excessive in certain areas, than in Assam, Bengal and Madras, where the climate is less dry. Blindness is also prevalent in the hill regions of Assam, Burma and Kashmir, where eyes are permanently injured in the winter months by the smoke of cooking-fires in foggy, unventilated, mud-walled rooms.

The blind of India do not have the saving advantage of a traditional occupation, as have the blind of Japan. Mahommedans sometimes make a fairly satisfactory living by committing the Koran to memory to recite at religious ceremonies, but the majority of blind persons in India live in desperate misery and degradation. It is even more difficult to overcome the apathy of the masses to the suffering of the blind here than in China, since the Hindu masses tenaciously hold to the belief that a blind person is merely suffering in this life for his sins in this or a former birth. The blind in India rely almost entirely on begging, which in many instances has been organized on a commercial basis. Blind men and women, and particularly children, are employed by agents, who divide the earnings of their victims according to contract.

A few blind stand out in Indian legend and history. King Dhritarashtra, immortalized in the *Mahabharata*, was blind from birth and yet ruled his kingdom wisely and well. It is written that the King's sight was at last given to him, that he might see (*Continued on page 196*)

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ALBERT KELLER

abounding tolerance, realizing at the same time that had I lived here in his own day I probably could not have been so broadminded.

Kalakaua's name means "Day of Battle," and it epitomizes his place in Hawaiian history. It was not his fault but his misfortune that most of the conflict between the old order and the new came to a focus in his reign. The forces of the old order played through him, and for that reason he could not win. The time had come for the old order to pass, and, when it fell, he fell with it.

For he looked to the past, even when he was apparently looking to the future. The old Hawaiian culture, such as it was, was static. One day was like another, one year was like another, one age was like another. The people ate, drank, loved and danced. There was no progress; there could be none, since there is no metallic ore in Hawaii, and without metals man remains in the stone age.

Kalakaua in his dreams of empire and greatness never caught the idea that a society could be in dynamic equilibrium, that it could continue to prosper while constantly changing and becoming. He regarded all change as a temporary annoyance, to be endured in order to arrive at larger and more comfortable stopping places. He never conceived that the process of change and becoming might have a substantial quality in itself. He was quick to see the superiority of the haole civilization over the culture of the primitive kanaka, and he tried with all his might to bring his kingdom up to the standards of the civilized world. But he misinterpreted what he saw, mistaking the nonessential for the real, assuming that magnificence was civilization. He loved and wanted the gaudy blossom of civilization, without understanding that it is rooted in character and ensouled by a will-to-become rather than by a will-to-have.

Kalakaua played a losing game alike in poker, in national politics, in world politics, but he could not help playing. He was fascinated by the possibilities of these games of chance and bluff but baffled by their psychology. Playing an alien game, he lost. He was a born loser. But Fate was not too unkind to him, after all. When she equipped him at birth with those qualities that made him a natural loser, she added other qualities also that made him—a good loser.

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(*Continued from page 168*)

God. He refused to retain the divine gift, however, because, having for a moment of eternity looked upon the purity of God, he desired never again to see an unworthy thing.

The twenty schools for India's blind, a drop in an ocean of need, are inadequate in equipment, workers and funds. They can accommodate only a thousand or two blind persons, whereas hundreds of thousands need training to meet their handicap.

The first modern school for the blind in Calcutta was started in 1897 by an Indian Christian, the Reverend L. B. Shah. When Mr. Shah was a young man, he experienced a serious eye trouble that, for a short period, rendered him blind. During this time he developed an active sympathy for the blind, which took tangible expression in the founding of the Calcutta School for the Blind. His son, A. K. Shah, who was one of the three delegates from India to the world blind conference in New York, is now principal of the school. The institution, set in six acres of ground, is equipped with playgrounds, gymnastic apparatus and swimming pool. Special attention and literary courses and workshops for industrial training, especially in mat and loom weaving and the making of rugs and cane furniture. Many of its blind graduates have distinguished themselves.

Another blind school that stands out for its excellent training and results is the Central Institute for the Deaf and Blind in Mysore, in South India. It was started as a private charity in 1901 and was taken over in 1927 by the Mysore government. His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore, long a patron of the school, contributes to its support.

The Mysore institute has a braille press, but it is hardly adequate for the needs of the school. There is no braille press for India as a whole, and most of the books for India, unless supplied by the National Institute for the Blind in London, have to be laboriously embossed by hand. One difficulty in the education of the Indian blind is the use of different codes for the various vernaculars. Since the number of sounds in all the Indian languages does not exceed the number of combinations that can be obtained from the standard braille dots, it would be possible to construct a uniform code for all the important Indian vernaculars. A national braille press, subsidized by the government, would give a great impetus to education for the blind in India.

A courageous beginning in work to prevent blindness in India has been made by C. G. Henderson, who was a delegate from India to the world blind conference. As collector in the Indian Civil Service, he had occasion to travel from village to village in the district of Khandesh, Bombay Presidency. His sympathy was aroused by the blind he encountered in obscure corners—far too many blind—resigned to a pathetic acceptance of their fate. Perhaps he was more sensitive to their condition than the average inspector, since he had a daughter who was blind. In 1913, Mr. Henderson began making inquiries about the blind persons in his district and sent all that he could persuade to go to the district civil hospital, where some had their sight restored by operation and proper treatment. He gradually worked out a scheme by which the *patel*, or headman, of each village in the district made out a list of the blind, the partially blind and those suffering from serious eye diseases. In all the districts he covered in the round of his official duties in western India—Khandesh, Surat, Nasik, Ratnagiri, Bijapur and Sind—he started local blind relief associations and made the villagers "eye-conscious."

Recently the All-India Blind Relief Association, with Mr. Henderson as president, was established to consolidate and extend work of local centers. Because of insufficient funds, it has thus far been obliged to concentrate its efforts upon four districts in western India—Bijapur, Chalisgaon, Palanpur and Sind—representing a population of some four millions. Four traveling clinics, each with field worker, compounder and servant, provided with drugs and instruments, tour the district villages. One of the chief advantages of Mr. Henderson's organization is the economy of maintenance. He has succeeded in enlisting the coöperation of all existing institutions and competent medical persons—government hospitals, local dispensaries, civil surgeons, missionary doctors. A district traveling unit is operated for about $250 a month. Its value can be estimated by figures tabulated for the work of one unit during part of 1927 and 1928: out of 1,967 totally blind patients who attended, 540 obtained some sight through operation. According to Mr. Henderson, one half the annual cost of maintaining one New York City hospital

revolutionist but bravado-bumbast and self-aggrandizement during the four years term of the fiascoans." (Good word, fiascoans.)

As for the military, by contrast: "Their character stands untarnished and unblemished, and were I allowed a paradox upon bulwers soleliqui on the force of his pen, I would transpose the sentiment by expressing for the benefit of the present crises, the ballot is mightier than the gun. . . . The [the military] stuck to their duty and discipline and saved not only themselves of being implicated as murderers, but saved life, property, plunder, and every accesses that would have been done under the Holy Name of Crime."

When the pamphleteer speaks of missionary influence in Hawaiian history, he begins to froth at the mouth; his ideas tumble forth faster than he can record them, and the diatribe ends in an unintelligible blub-blub.

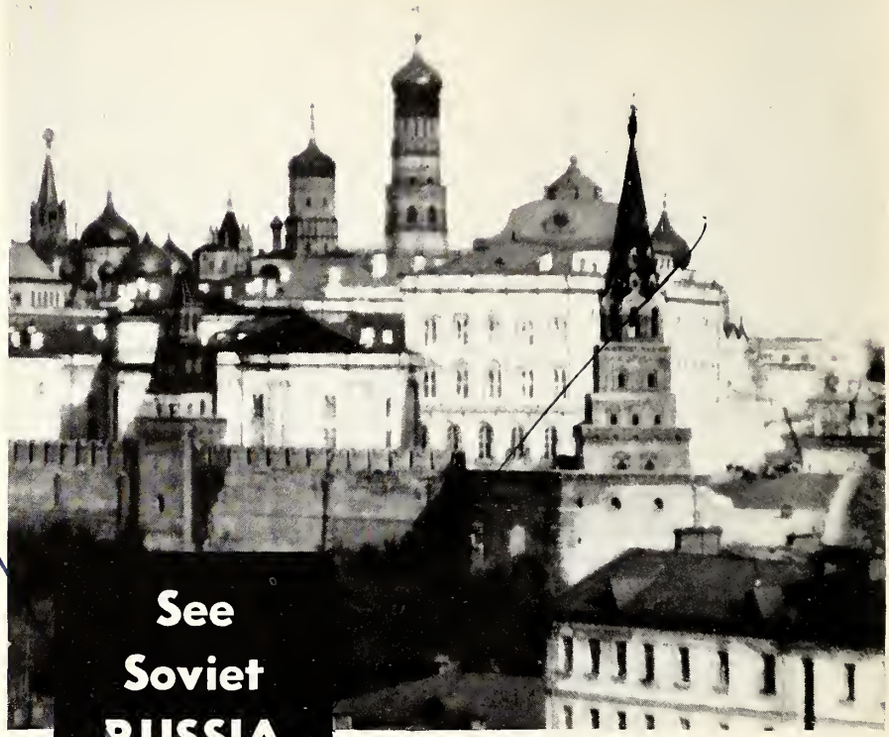
"We were taught to be more enlightened and less barbarian, to discard the Malo and assume a little more *parisian* garb, to discontinue athletic exercise and games of surf riding for a little more devotion and prayer, to exclude honest work and farming for a little more Mammon, and less greediness, to give up your lands and properties for a little more Holy Ghost. To appease the anger of *Him* who furnished and lavished this, and he that doeth, shall reap a ten million plantation. Throw and cast thy bread upon the water thusly, verily this was done. Presto-change! Hands up! Your King! and your Dom! or a little lead. But we only got in answer from Madame Pele's sonorous, odiferous, sulphureous, affluctive grunt *mahope!* the interpretation of which is the sweet by and bye! Uh! and down went McGinty to reap Elisha's boy, all in their suit of sailor clothes, &c."

In the succeeding paragraph the author betrays his own identity by unconsciously relapsing into the royal "we" which he has thus far studiously avoided. I like this paragraph especially, because it reveals so unconsciously his rare good nature and his total lack of personal spite or bitterness.

"Though a more sentiment of gravity, befitting the occasion, still one cannot help to use a little satire, so thoroughly do we enjoy the joke, and the manner we have been imposed upon. Anyhow we hope we have learnt a good lesson, and shall in the future be more wise accordingly."

Kalakaua died in 1891, in San Francisco, while on a visit to the United States for his health. The doctors said he died of Bright's disease, but his friends said he died of a broken heart. Thus passed this most picturesque of Hawaiian monarchs.

Kalakaua has been condemned for yielding to the advice of his Prime Minister, Walter Murray Gibson, but how could a pleasure-loving, grandeur-bitten, poverty-stricken Polynesian prince resist this supersalesman, who beguiled alike Guatemalan statesmen, Dutch governors, Malay pirates, Congressional committees, secretaries of state and even the President of the United States? History records only two men who failed to swallow everything Gibson told them—outside of his political enemies, of course, who would not believe him anyway, even if he told the truth. These two exceptional individuals were Nathaniel Hawthorne and Brigham Young, both masters of words themselves, and even they could not boast a one-hundred-per-cent triumph. Hawthorne admits that he half believed him and lent him money, and Brigham Young allowed him to do the Mormon Church out of thousands of dollars' worth of property.



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Travel in Soviet RUSSIA

of India there are only four well-equipped eye hospitals—those in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Lahore. Egypt, with a population twenty-three times smaller than that of India, has fifty.

In spite of a vigorous campaign in recent years for the alleviation of eye diseases, Egypt holds the world's record for bad eyes, with thirty times as much blindness as Belgium and twenty-one times as much as the United States. But in Egypt total blindness is defined as inability to count fingers at a distance of one meter, whereas in India and most other countries it means total inability to see. According to the report of the Government of Egypt, acute ophthalmia accounts for 75 per cent of the blindness. Ninety-five per cent of the population is afflicted with trachoma, so prevalent in Egypt that it is known throughout the Near East as "Egyptian ophthalmia."

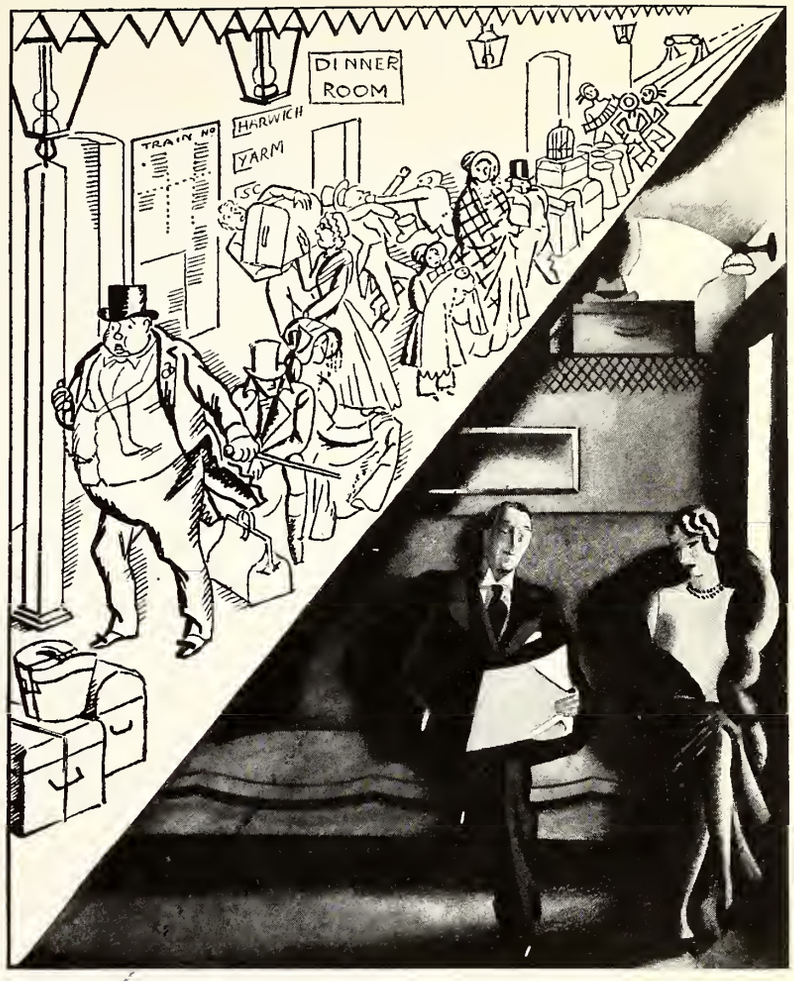
Egypt owes a fine system of relief to Sir Ernest Cassel, who, in 1903, gave £E 41,000 to found the ophthalmic section of the Department of Public Health. A director of ophthalmic hospitals came from England to supervise and extend the work of the department, which was later made a branch of the Egyptian Government Service.

In addition to permanent eye hospitals in Egypt there are a number of traveling hospitals. From the practical point of view, these are even more valuable. Each traveling unit is equipped with several tents, one of them large enough for performing operations. The more elaborate units have two surgeons who can perform two hundred operations a month and, with assistance, treat two hundred and fifty patients a day. Special attention is given to the treatment of children. The traveling hospital remains in one camping ground for several months and thus gains the confidence of the people in the neighborhood. Such hospitals have now become very popular and have spread far and wide information on the care of the eyes and the early need for medical attention in cases of eye affliction. The cost of eye-relief work in Egypt is borne by the central government, local taxation and public subscription.

In other parts of the Near East, the story is the same. In the past few years an extensive antitrachoma campaign has been carried on among the school children of Palestine by the government Department of Health and the Hadassah Medical Organization. In Armenia, Syria and Greece, the Near East Relief has done notable work for the prevention and alleviation of trachoma.

There are various methods of treating trachoma, one of them a delicate surgical operation in which healthy skin from the lip is grafted in a ring around the pupil of the eye—a method invented by Dr. Rudolf Denig, of New York City. Dr. Hideyo Noguchi, the great Japanese bacteriologist, who died of yellow fever in Africa, in 1928, a martyr to science, devoted much time to the study of trachoma. After two years of research work, he made the important announcement in 1927 that he had succeeded in producing trachoma in the eyes of monkeys, but he sailed immediately afterward for the Gold Coast of Africa and died before he could put his notes into shape. In 1930 Dr. P. K. Glitsky of the Rockefeller Institute and Miss Sicher Ascher, a bacteriologist of Prague, succeeded independently in repeating Dr. Noguchi's experiment of producing trachoma in the eyes of monkeys, and Dr. Addario of Palermo, in the eyes of a man. With the isolation of the trachoma germ, science undoubtedly [illegible] able to control this dread di[illegible]

Then



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Last year, at the World Conference on Work for the Blind, the delegates, representing thirty-seven countries, formed an International Council for the Blind with headquarters in Paris and appointed an executive committee of nine members. International coöperation and exchange of ideas with regard to the most progressive methods both for assisting the blind and for preventing blindness will certainly bring some measure of relief to the millions of oriental blind and will arrest the tragedy of preventable blindness among them.

MOHENJO-DARO

(*Continued from page 185*)

which are perforated from side to side, with curved back and flat obverse bearing a row of pictographic characters, are also found in considerable numbers and, more rarely, round stamp seals with geometrical designs.

The device upon the square stamp seal almost invariably includes an animal in the center, with or without a manger or cult object before it, together with a line or two of pictographic signs along the top. The uniformity of design is paralleled only by the uniformity of style throughout the whole period during which Mohenjo-daro was occupied. It seems likely that, although the city was reoccupied and rebuilt several times, its total duration was not long enough to allow of much change in the mode of writing or the accepted canons of art.

Of the animal devices, the so-called "unicorn" was by far the most popular. It is a strange beast, rather bull-like in body; and there is the possibility that the one horn really represents two, one hiding the other. The double manger-like object before it appears to have been made of basketwork—as are many of the mangers in the modern villages round about the ancient site—or of leatherwork. But why there should be upper and lower parts to it remains for the present a mystery. Other animals especially favored were the short-horned and Brahmani bulls. The frequent appearance of the elephant, rhinoceros and tiger suggests that there was a rather larger rainfall in ancient than in modern Sind, since these animals are forest-loving and at present quite unknown in the Indus Valley.

It is upon the seals that the dating of Mohenjo-daro largely depends, though there is ample and quite definite evidence from the close similarities between large numbers of the small objects found in the three cities of Mohenjo-daro, Ur and Kish, from the style of the painted pottery and its motifs, from architectural features and so on, that the later levels of Mohenjo-daro are practically contemporaneous with the earlier levels of Ur and Kish. In addition to the seal found at Kish, which established the pre-Sargonic date of the Indus civilization (that is, prior to c. 2750 B.C.), a most interesting seal of Indian origin was found at Ur. It appears to have belonged to an enterprising merchant from one of the Indus Valley cities who realized that his customers in Sumer could not read his name as written. He accordingly had it engraved in cuneiform characters, which are in the style of 3000 B.C.

Before the discovery of Mohenjo-daro, the history of India seemed to begin with the coming of the Aryans, traditionally credited to the latter part of the second millennium B.C. But the excavation of Mohenjo-daro takes us into the pre-Aryan past. So far the unravelling of the mystery of this past has been very heavily handicapped by the fact that the people of Mohenjo-daro and the companion cities wrote upon some perishable material, such as wood or bark or parchment—

unfortunately hardly take us anywhere in the decipherment of the language. They most probably give the names of the owners of the seals, with perhaps a title here and there. A careful compilation of the various characters on the seals shows that well above three hundred were in use, which makes it evident that the language was not an alphabetic one, but was agglutinative. But without any inscriptions long enough to give inflections and verbal forms there is at present little hope of working out this ancient language of the Indus Valley.

In the same way that the absence of inscriptions rules out the possibility of drawing up any "history" of the Indus Valley during the fourth and third millenniums B.C.—and here a not unnatural envy of the comparative ease with which it is possible to give a story of the vicissitudes of Ur must be admitted—the absence of wall decorations makes the picturing of contemporary life a matter of slowly piecing together minute bits of evidence. The people of Mohenjo-daro apparently were not artists in the sense that they wished to surround themselves with beauty and adornment. From the paintings and sculptures on the tomb and temple and palace walls of Egypt a great deal has been learned about the religious and domestic life of the early Egyptians, and of their arts and crafts, even to the making of bread and of wine; the goldsmith, the basket-weaver, the rope-maker, all ply their trades before our eyes. In Sumer, Assyria and Babylonia we see the life of the times depicted in inlay or sculpture or colored tiles.

All this information we miss in the Indus Valley cities. Traces there are here and there of plaster upon the walls, but quite insignificant; nor do they show any signs of having been adorned with anything more than roughly executed bands of color. Inlay there is, but almost solely geometrical in design and clearly used for the ornamentation of boxes and furniture rather than of walls. Sculpture is represented among the finds, but confined to crudely carved statues; in stone-working there is nothing approaching the artistry and skill of execution of the mural scenes of Egypt and Assyria, save the engraving of the seals.

Concerning the religion of the Indus Valley people, so far we can only make surmises. Though there are few statue heads in stone, the large number of female terra-cotta figurines that has been found—mostly too well made to be children's toys, and all alike in dress and headdress—suggests that a Mother Goddess was worshiped. Her figure may have stood in its little shrine in every house. This Mother Goddess, if so she be, is invariably attired in a wide girdle and several necklaces of beads, represented by pellets of clay stuck on before the figurine was baked.

But there were also typically Indian features in the religion of the ancient Indus Valley. On one of the earliest seals found, a four-faced figure is seated with legs in the *yogi*-like posture associated with the state of contemplation. Around this figure stand four beasts, the bull, elephant, buffalo and rhinoceros; and it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that a Siva-like god was worshiped in the aspect of Pasupati, Lord of Beasts. A beast of some kind also occupies the place of importance in the middle of each of the square stamp seals, with few exceptions. The many cases in which a cult object is associated with this beast suggest that the gods of the Indus Valley were worshiped in the aspect of an animal, as was Isis in the form of the cow in Egypt.

Why Mohenjo-daro, obviously an impor-

center of trade and culture [illegible]

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